

Dome Mountain WMA 2018 Addition Environmental Assessment Public Comments

Comment was open May 4 – June 3, 2018

May 7, 2018

Karen Loveless, Livingston Area Wildlife Biologist
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
1400 South 19th Ave.
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www.mtaudubon.org

Dear Ms. Loveless,

Please accept the following comments from Montana Audubon regarding the *Dome Mountain Wildlife Management Area (WMA) Environmental Assessment* to acquire a 161-acre addition to the Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) land holdings in the area. Montana Audubon is the coordinating entity for the nine Audubon Society Chapters in the state of Montana. Currently there are approximately 5,400 Audubon members in the state. Our mission is to protect birds and other wildlife, and their habitats. You may receive comments from other members of the Society.

Montana Audubon supports this acquisition (the Proposed Action) for the following reasons:

- First and foremost, the project will block up more wildlife habitat in perpetuity. FWP already owns a conservation easement on the property, which illustrates that this area has important wildlife habitat that compliments other habitat in the WMA. FWP ownership of this parcel also ensures that FWP alone will manage the habitat for wildlife, which we support.
- The acquisition will likely reduce public services needs long-term as there will no longer be a private residence in a very remote location. It is our understanding that the current property owner has a yearlong travel easement through the Dome Mountain WMA to the parcel—and that this easement will no longer be maintained, making management of the property much simpler.
- FWP is making a commitment to ensure that long-term and increased weed management will occur on the property, which is good policy.
- FWP is also making a commitment to improve the riparian habitat on the property; riparian areas are some of Montana's most important wildlife habitat.

We would like FWP, as much as possible, to manage the newly acquired Dome Mountain WMA parcel for its native vegetation. It is especially important for FWP to manage its wetland and riparian lands in a way that allows recreationists to access the area, but also protect this important habitat for both fish and wildlife habitat.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Janet H. Ellis". Below the signature, the name "Janet H. Ellis" and the title "Senior Director of Policy" are printed in a sans-serif font.

Janet H. Ellis
Senior Director of Policy

Audubon
Chapters
in Montana

Bitterroot
Audubon
Bitterroot Valley

Five Valleys
Audubon
Missoula

Flathead
Audubon
Kalispell

Last Chance
Audubon
Helena

Mission Mountain
Audubon
Polson

Pintner
Audubon
Butte/Dillon

Sagewea
Audubon
Bozeman

Upper Missouri
Breaks Audubon
Great Falls

Yellowstone
Valley Audubon
Billings

Printed on FSC Certified paper using soy based ink.

Dear Fish Wildlife & parks Commission,

I support Alternative B the Proposed Action for FWP to purchase 161 acres as an addition to the Dome Mountain WMA. The property should be managed for wildlife, conservation, and public recreation, as Allen Nelson would have liked. When Allen & Edwin Nelson sold the FWP their land, they did it because they knew how valuable it was for wildlife habitat. Allen told me there's some land that should be open to the public for everyone's enjoyment, and this is the final piece of that property.

Thank you

Bert Otis

Good Morning Karen,

The Park County Rod and Gun Club is supportive of acquiring the 161 acres of private in holdings as an addition to the Dome Mountain Wildlife Management Area. Our Board of Directors also stands ready to help MT FWP with any logistical issues that may arise in relation to this acquisition. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any requests.

Respectfully,

Joey Bauman, President

Dalton Booth, Vice President

Margie Nelson, Secretary

Hayes Goosey, Treasurer

Directors: Bill Bryce, Paul Dowell, Lou Goosey

Karen, This is a great purchase by the MTFWP. Very happy to see it turned into public land. Nice to see it can actually be an elk refuge again and some place for a guy to squat. Excellent work!

Brad Shultz

Hi, Karen.

I am familiar with this parcel for a proposed acquisition. I think it's a great opportunity to get this acreage included in the WMA. It will make the area whole and less disturbed for elk winter range.

Thank you for your work.

Hank Poeschl

Karen,

What a great idea. Let's get this done. I am all for this purchase. Would like to see more acres purchased. But one step at a time. Hope this helps.

Thanks

Jim Herrly

Dear Karen:

I write in strong support of Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks' proposal to purchase fee title to the adjacent 161-acre parcel as an addition to the Dome Mountain WMA to be managed for wildlife, conservation, and public recreation. As the Environmental Assessment states, the target parcel is a private inholding strategically located within intact habitat adjacent to the Dome Mountain WMA and the Custer Gallatin National Forest.

The acquisition, at 30 percent of property's current value, protects the integrity of the Dome Mountain WMA by removing the disturbance from a future private owner; removes a yearlong travel easement across the WMA to the parcel; continues to pay tax payments to Park County, while reducing public service needs since there will no longer be a private residence in a very remote location requiring those services.

Respectfully Submitted,

Whitney Tilt

Karen:

Please know the Gallatin Wildlife Association supports this acquisition. Keep up the good work.

Thanks,

Glenn Hockett

Volunteer President, Gallatin Wildlife Association

Ms. Loveless,

I **strongly** support the acquisition of this 161 acre parcel to be added to the Dome Mountain Wildlife Management Area! Thank you for sending me this notice.

Regards,

Matt E. Ekstrom

The FWP cannot even control the weeds in their fishing access sites, how on earth will they control them in such a remote location. Absolutely against the sale of this parcel

Susan Johnson

Karen

I one hundred percent support this acquisition. This will make an excellent addition to the Dome Mountain area in one of the most important wildlife corridors in the West. Thanks.

Geo. Wuerthner

Karen,

Sounds like a good plan. Franklin could use the money!

Bill Harris

Karen,

I support FWP acquisition of the 161 acre private inholding for addition to DMWMA.

Alex Russell

The Montana Sportsmen Alliance would like to go on record as supporting this land purchase.

Thanks,
MSA
Joe Perry